

**Testimony Supporting HB 6321 An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act**  
**March 8, 2021**

Dear Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Dr. Lauren Weaver and I am a pediatric resident from West Hartford, Connecticut. I write to provide testimony in support of **Raised Bill No. 6321, An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act**. Passing the Connecticut Parentage Act is a necessary step towards ensuring that *all* children in Connecticut can benefit from secure and consistent relationships with their parents.

Secure parental attachment is crucial for childhood development. The Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University states: “The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.” Secure attachment in childhood promotes cognitive and language development as well as executive function and decreases poor outcomes in adulthood including depression and anxiety.<sup>1</sup>

The current law leaves many children without the protection of a legal relationship with their parents which can be damaging to the current relationship and to the child’s long-term health and development. Additionally, this act would also protect children’s health because they would be given equal access to parental medical decision making and health insurance. The current law does not reflect the diversity of Connecticut’s families and should be updated to protect all children, no matter what their family make-up is.

As a pediatric resident, I have seen how crucial legal recognition is when a child is sick. Only legal parents can provide health insurance to their children, and only legal parents have the right to visit their child in the hospital. Only legal parents have the right and responsibility to make important decisions about their child’s medical care. This often means that non-biological parents are unable to help their children when they are at their most vulnerable.

In recognition of the vital role that secure parental relationships play in children’s long-term health and well-being, we must update Connecticut’s laws to reflect the diversity of today’s families. The Connecticut Parentage Act will ensure that a child’s parents can gain the legal recognition they need to fully care for their children. For the foregoing reasons, I ask the Committee to support Bill 6321.

Sincerely,  
Lauren Weaver, MD

References

1. Moullin, S., Waldfogel, J., & Washbrook, E. (2014). Baby Bonds: Parenting, Attachment and a Secure Base for Children. Sutton Trust.